

**FREMONT BUDGET COMMITTEE
MNUTES, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2003**

The meeting was called to order at 7:05p.m.by co-chairman Marc Wood. Those members in attendance included: Joe Delahunty, Peg Pinkham, School Board Rep., Charles Kimball, Rick Clark, Selectman, and Judy Peterson. Those not present were Marilyn Baker and Thom Roy.

SAU 14 Superintendent Barbara Munsey and Business Manager Toby Eaton were present along with School Board Members Joe Dreyer, Chris Kenneway, and Marianne Guibadoni.

Peg Pinkham had copies of the draft school district budget for 2004-2005 available for Budget Committee members to review and ask questions. It was noted that the budget was only a draft because it had not yet been on voted on by the School Board. Business Manager Toby Eaton provided an overview of the major budget changes regarding the increases in expenditures and decreases in revenue that directly affect the tax rate. Toby also explained House Bill 608 which was recently passed that modifies the adequacy formulas and will decrease the revenues from the State over the next three years until the School is basically funded by the Town.

Questions were asked regarding the health insurance premium cost increase and it was explained that this would be there whether or not the teacher's contract was approved.

High School tuition was discussed and it was questioned as to what the cost per student is. The anticipated cost per student at Epping is \$9227 which is in line with area local towns.

A warrant article will be presented regarding an eight room addition to the school. There was much discussion held regarding a possible middle school on the land currently owned by the Town.

Toby Eaton noted that the Health Insurance increase and the revenue decreases make up about 87% of the budget increases.

The Regular education line increase includes the addition of 2 new teachers, - a 6th grade teacher and a 3rd grade teacher.

Joe Dreyer noted that the Operation of plant increase is based on the approval of the addition, which would require additional time.

The School budget draft does not include the salary increases for teachers because the contract is currently under negotiation and can't be included.

There will be a warrant article presented for Charter Governance for school. Joe Dreyer explained that there would still be a regular meeting with a deliberative session and voting will be at the polls. Stipulations can be placed to require a certain percentage of voters to be present .

Speech includes an added position and it was noted that the costs associated with Special Education are spread throughout the budget.

The next meetings are scheduled for: January 6th, Tuesday, January 12th Monday, and January 20th, Tuesday. We will finish reviewing the School Budget and vote on the Town Budget after the Selectmen have finished voting.

Judy Peterson, Secretary